



the **RARRA RAG**

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ROCHESTER AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, INC.

VOL. 56

APRIL 2004

NO.8

HAMFEST, AWA MEET, BPL, and RaRa ANNUAL MEETING

DETAILS INSIDE

70 AND COUNTING

Bill Hopkins, AA2YV

Get ready with a blank piece of paper: What should your "parts needed" list look like; what new ham gear is a "must"? And when is the Emergency Communications presentation, the ARES Meeting or the Log-Book-of-the-World session? Then again, you might check to see if you have enough QSL cards to bring for DXCC, WAS or VUCC.

CONTINUED 70 AND COUNTING PAGE 4

Automatic Position Reporting System (APRS) Brad Armstrong W1YX

The attendance at the SKYWARN Spotter Training Session, our March program, was outstanding! Over 80 club members were there to take advantage of this opportunity to learn another way in which amateur radio can serve the public interest. Judy Levan, N2TEZ, has newly added the ability to show excellent

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RaRa

MEETING

APRIL 2, 2004

8:00 PM

**HENRIETTA FIRE HALL
3129 E. HENRIETTA R**

APRS

(Automatic Position Reporting System)

Presented by

Jim DeTucci N2IXD

Rochester Hamfest June 4-5-6

Harold Smith, K2HC, General Chairman

The 70th annual Rochester Hamfest combined with the Atlantic Division Convention is almost here. It will be held at the Monroe County Fairgrounds on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 4-5-6.

Your help is needed: To make this years event a success, we need the help of each and every RaRa member.

Your assignment: Gather your copies of QST, CQ and any other amateur publications you possess. Sit down at your computer. Scan the pages of the magazines. Go to the web sites of the advertisers. Secure their email address. Send each and every one of those advertisers your own personal message. Invite them to come to Rochester to exhibit and sell their wares.

You can tell them that our event is attended by more than 5,000 people who are ready to buy. You can also tell them we have a special rate of \$69 at a full service first class hotel, the Holiday Inn Rochester South.

You can tell them you wish to see and feel their product. Tell them their advertisements are great but you need to personally know what may be special about their offerings. Tell them to call the Hamfest business office during regular east coast business hours for additional information. The office phone is 585-424-7184. They can also visit the Hamfest web site, www.rochesterhamfest.org. the site is updated daily..

There are hamfests scheduled virtually every weekend around the nation throughout the year. Most are of the half-day flea market variety. Rochester area amateurs are fortunate

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the RARA RAG

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PREZ SEZ...

George Platteter, AA2FO

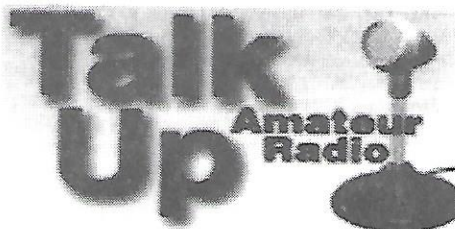
SPRING IS HERE!! Well almost. Granted, March 21st is the official date for spring. However, nature doesn't seem to agree. It takes a little longer before we can comfortably go out and start playing with new antennas, or whatever else turns us on that requires outdoor activity. Unless, of course, you are one of those hams who believes you won't have the blessing of the antenna gods unless you erect/repair it under the most adverse weather condition.

This time of year the administrative pulse quickens as preparations begin for such things as the Hamfest, and the RaRa Special Display Booth. Will we have one, and if so, what will be featured? Committees have been formed to handle such tasks. Then there are the nominations for next year's officers, such as Vice President, Board of Directors, etc. And don't forget the several spring and summertime public service opportunities.

The April meeting will feature an excellent program put together by Jim Detucci, N2IXD, and Jon Dickason, N2JAC, on APRS (Automated Packet Reporting System) and Echolink. For those of us not familiar with the APRS part of it, let me just give you a hint. APRS is a real-time tracking system on packet that permits you to track a moving object (a mobile station?), using computer graphics software. You have to see and hear this one.

Looking further into the crystal ball we find Ed Gable working on his presentation for "Old Timers Nite" to be presented at the May meeting, and then the RaRa annual picnic at Creekside Lodge in Ellison Park on June 19th. It's not too early to start thinking about the picnic.

As a final note we need to thank Dick Goslee, KG2I, for the many hours he spends each year publishing the very useful Club Directory. What a beautiful job. Personally, I would be lost without it.



to have one of the largest hamfests in the nation in their own back yard. There are only a handful of events the size of the Rochester Hamfest.

In addition to a huge flea market, there are national commercial exhibitors, programs and seminars, amateur testing, an awards banquet, and many other special events.

Plan now to attend a terrific weekend of amateur radio events. Tell your out of town friends we have a special negotiated rate of only \$69 for hotel rooms at Hamfest headquarters, the Holiday Inn Rochester South.

Tickets available at the gate are only \$9 (U.S.). A 200 sq. ft. (10'x20') flea market parking space is only \$10 (U.S.). Multiple spaces must be purchased for larger vehicles or space used. Tickets for the Friday evening May 30 awards banquet at the Holiday Inn Rochester South are only \$20 (U.S.). A registration ticket must be held or purchased with your banquet ticket.

Additional details are at your disposal on the web site: www.rochesterhamfest.org. The information contained on that site is updated daily.

NEXT RAG DEADLINE 04/19/04

RaRa

Amateur Radio License Testing

**All Elements Needed To Complete
a License Class**

Saturday APRIL 17, 2004

Contact Cheryl Joyce AB2NU

For any special needs (585)-533-9252)

Registration - 8:30 a.m.

Testing - 9:00 a.m.

Room 2150, Buildin 76

(Park in Lot F)

Rochester Institute of Technology

1 Lomb Memorial Drive

Rochester, NY 14623

New Rochester ARES/Red Cross Packet Node

Peter Fournia, W2SKY

Our new packet node in Penfield, NY was operated successfully on February 27, 2004. Connections were made to about 15 different nodes located in central NY.

The node is sponsored by Monroe County ARES with significant help from RARA and RAPS. Its key mission is to serve ARES, the Red Cross and be available for RACES use. Of course all hams are encouraged to use it. Principal contributors have been Peter Fournia W2SKY, Jon Dickason N2JAC, and Bruce Blair WB2QKO. Most equipment in on loan with the expectation that replacement equipment will be resourced from the ham community.

The node currently has 2 ports: one on 145.010 MHz and one on the 440 MHz band. Both can be used by local hams using typical 1200 baud TNC's. The 440 port is linked to WB2QKO in Wayne County which gives us access to the North East FlexNet. North East FlexNet is a group of over 100 packet nodes connecting about 10 states in the NE, plus or minus depending on the day. Our node is intended to extend the FlexNet to the west side of Rochester. Connect to W2SKY on 145.010 MHz to access it.

When navigating the North East FlexNet in September 2003, I was impressed with the ease of connectivity, use and speed over the network that had been in place during the previous 10 years ago. Yes, our local 1200 baud rate is slow but the total time and ease to connect to NYC, Long Island, MA or CT was much better than 10 years ago. The software used by each node in the path has enabled that. (Of course the dedicated PEOPLE who developed and maintain each of these nodes are the most important resource in the network!)

The FlexNet System

The software is called FlexNet and resides at the node. **No equipment change is required by users.** FlexNet node software is adaptive to the connectivity conditions at each node. Many improvements have made it the preferred choice by packet node system operators. For experienced sysop's, it is not that difficult to implement. For users it appears faster and easier. *CONTINUED NODE PAGE 4*

CONTINUED FROM HAMFEST OUR 70th PAGE 1

Ask me why I like the Rochester Hamfest: This is a BIG Hamfest. One of the largest in the nation, it is an official ARRL event and draws major ham gear manufacturers and suppliers. It's right in my backyard, and my visit to vendor booths is my annual "learning curve." Amateur License testing is also available for new tickets or upgrades.

Now, ask me why the spouse likes the Hamfest: She has offered to pay the \$10 fee for a single 10x20 foot Fleamarket bay so I can sell my not-anymore-so-useful-to-me (and her) equipment and parts. She insists I have to pay the \$9.00 entry ticket myself (\$7.50 if I pay in advance using internet info). The publication **Hamfest Times** I received by mail can also be used.

Hey, come by, meet and greet at the RaRa exhibits and programs. You can sell a nice piece of gear at Saturday's "**Bring-n-Buy**," meaning that you don't have to stick around to make the sale. There'll also be \$100 prize certificates drawn hourly at the Hamfest HQ Central.

Know anyone from out of town who needs lodging (not at your QTH)? A special \$69 rate is available at the Holiday Inn Holidome. Just have them log onto www.rochesterhamfest.org to get things started. And don't forget Friday

AMATEUR RADIO LUNCHEON

Ray Pickens WA2MYG

To all who can arrange their schedule? You are welcome to attend the last Friday of the Month (Unless it falls on a holiday) luncheon at the Ridge Rd. West Old Country Buffet located in Stone-Ridge Plaza 12:00 noon + or -. After two (three if one counts the double take in last months RAG) articles in the RAG the attendance jumped two fold or better that is a good thing. This month I hope to see more new and or old faces in attendance.

The next Luncheon will be on April 30, 2004.

NOTICE

The Annual Corporate Meeting of RaRa
(Rochester Amateur Radio Association Inc.)

And election of Officers will be held on

May 7, 2004 8:00 PM at the

Henrietta Fire Hall

3129 E. Henrietta Rd.

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CONTINUED FROM NODE PAGE 3

For example, knowing the call signs of nodes in the NYC and Long Island I was able to connect using a simple command C <callsign>. The FlexNet system automatically routed my packets to them. This is the case when the network is operating well and users had recently been using the network. However, I was disappointed when navigating the network on February 27. Connectivity seemed to have deteriorated requiring me to explore the links that connect the nodes. This is the method used prior to FlexNet. I am hopeful that node operators will bring the network to full life if emergency exercises are scheduled or if packet usage is stimulated.

User Procedures

If you are a past packet user you will notice a few differences. A prompt has been added, "=>" which is the FlexNet signature. It indicates that the node is ready for your next command. Non FlexNet nodes do not have this prompt which often confused the operator as to whether the node has responded and ready for the next task. Two other differences are important to know. Use the "D" command to list the DESTINATIONS available. The previous system used "N" to list the NODES available. Also, use the "Q" command to quit or disconnect from the node. The previous system used "B" as in BYE to do that. Many of the other commands are similar to the previous network operating system. User commands are accessed by typing "H" for Help. One should copy and store this help response for future assistance. The other commands help you explore the network connectivity. View the ports of various nodes using the "P" command if you want to understand the links at each node. Of course keyboard to keyboard conferencing can be done as well as sending text tiles. This is a high value for backup emergency communications.

In addition to W2SKY on 145.010 MHz in Penfield, hams on the east side may be able to connect directly to W2QYT in Auburn on 145.070 MHz or to WB2QKO at Brantling on 144.950 MHz. These are all FlexNet nodes. From there use the FlexNet commands to explore connectivity in the Northeast. Response to the "A" command will give you a big list of possible destinations in the Northeast. That destination list is also available from

CONTINUED NODE TOP OF PAGE 5

www.northeastflexnet.org/. Save the list. If the network is operating well, a command like "C <callsign>" will connect you to a station on that list.

You can also enter the network from the FAIRPT node on 145.090 MHz or KPARK node on 145.030 MHz. These are very reliable and resourceful nodes operated by Bob Kester K2JJT and George Masny KA2GPJ. They use TheNet, not FlexNet. You must use the "N" and "B" commands there until you see the "=>". Thereafter use the "D" and "B" commands for navigating. Use the FLXCNY node to navigate toward W2QYT in Auburn to enter the FlexNet system.

Current Status

Currently the W2SKY node has an intermittent connection to the network. This will be fixed soon. When fixed, you will see many destinations appear in response to your "D" command.

Work is continuing to build speed, reliability and redundancy into our network. I have been loaned 9600 baud modems for backbone links. There are two additional viable link options that are being pursued. FlexNet will automatically adapt routing as links are added or dropped. Furthermore, KPARK and FAIRPT system operators are considering changing over to FlexNet.

I encourage you to look into packet again. When our node is fully functional it can be a useful backup communications method for local and state wide communications. It's also fun to explore the network.

Multiple Sclerosis Bike Tour

Keith Freeberg, N2BEL

The 2004 MS 150 Finger Lakes Bike Tour is being held on Saturday, August 21st and Sunday, August 22nd at the New York Chiropractic College in Seneca Falls. There are a 100-mile, 60-mile, and 30-mile route on Saturday and a 50-mile and 25-mile route on Sunday. We are anticipating 400 cyclists at the event. We can provide dorm rooms for any Volunteers that would like to stay both days. The event kicks off at 7:00am Saturday Morning and goes until about 5:00pm Saturday Evening. Saturday HAM radio needs include; 5 Rest Stops, 6 to 9 chase/SAG vehicles, 2 Ambulances, 2 supply trucks, 2 to 5 mechanical

support vehicles, Start/Finish support and one Medical 'Fly Car.' (25 positions available)

We start riding again on Sunday at about 7:00am and the last cyclist normally crosses the finish line about 3:00pm. Sunday HAM radio needs include; 5 Rest Stops, 4 to 6 chase/SAG vehicles, 2 Ambulances, 2 supply trucks, 2 to 4 mechanical support vehicles, Start/Finish support and one Medical 'Fly Car.' (21 positions available)

This event will challenge our logistical, communications and readiness skills in an environment where we will also be pampered with good food, beautiful surroundings and a friendly staff to work with. If want to have a relaxing good time with HAM radio and do something great for a worthy cause with one day of your weekend, this is it! Call or email me with which day you can volunteer and what you would type of position you would like to try. There are many opportunities here to learn neat things like APRS and Network communications in a fun, relaxed way.

Contact: Keith Freeberg, N2BEL -- 585-254-0722 or n2bel@frontiernet.net

RaRa Rag 20 Years Ago, April 1984

Ed Gable K2MP

Then club historian Bruce Kelley, W2ICE, presented Old Timer's Night with a slide show depicting early Rochester radio events and historical references. The cover of the *Rag* had a picture of Amateur station 8PZ, the call letters of the Radio Club of Rochester, which 7 years later changed its name to RaRa. The big Amateur Radio news at this time was the beginning of the now all too familiar VE testing program. The FCC announced that it had approved five new VEC's and had issued an eight page document detailing the functions and duties of the VEC's and VE's. No longer did area Amateurs have to travel to Buffalo to take FCC exams. Sherwood Snyder, W2KFU, wrote an interesting article titled *Amateur Radio and the Law* that told of an interesting case law that put an Amateur Radio Repeater group versus an alleged jammer. The Repeater group won. Sherwood Snyder is way past retirement age but still works at the family practice on Main Street in Rochester. Sherwood is a good

CONTINUED 20 YEARS PAGE 6

friend to Amateur Radio and in the past has helped many groups organize and write proper constitutions and by-laws. Also announced in this issue was that Steve Sykes, KA2KGM, was appointed to the ARRL field position of AIRS, or the *Amateur Interference Reporting Station*. This short-lived program was an attempt to identify intruding HF stations into our ham bands. The program failed as it was determined that you could report until the next sun spot cycle and nothing was going to happen to rid the bands of intruders from uncooperative foreign countries. AMSAT reported that the UoSAT-2 satellite was successfully launched but that the 2 meter down link cannot yet be brought up by the control stations. With regret it was reported that Gene Schwartz, WB2CNQ, was reported as a silent key. From the Want Ads you could buy a Drake C line from Don Taylor, KB2CU. Harvey's Ham in Caledonia, NY, remained a long time advertiser.

Surprise FCC Announcement

Ed Gable k2mp Radio's Roving and Ranting Revolutionary Reporter

With all of the noise about BPL, a very quiet and surprise announcement came out of the FCC offices just this week, your reporter found out. In a move to alleviate the effects of the latest round of budget cuts, and the alarming rise in gasoline prices, the FCC has told highly placed members of the Amateur Radio Community that it will authorize Hams to sell advertising on their QSO's in the ham bands. According to the FCC informant, Mr. Lee Vangrol, the FCC intends to limit the number of spot announcements to no more than 5 minutes in any half hour. The new policy is expected to go into effect in July. Soon you can expect to hear QSO's such as "Thanks, OM, for the call, but before I fill you in on my QTH and the RST, let's take time out for a word from M&N's. These coated sugar cubes give the tired contester a burst of energy to keep working into the wee hours of the night. Pop an M&N and watch your contest scores soar to new heights." In the mean time, Smitty Greenkeys, spokesman for The League of Amateur Relayers, the voice of hams everywhere, says it is studying the issue and is investigating a fee structure.

FCC Proposes Rules for BPL Systems

From the ARRL Website www.arrl.org

NEWINGTON, CT, Feb 25, 2004--The FCC this week released its Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) on Broadband over Power Line (BPL) systems. The 38-page NPRM--in ET Dockets 03-104 and 04-37--proposes amendments to FCC Part 15 rules to define so-called "access BPL," make rules specific to BPL systems and provide measurement guidelines for BPL devices and systems. It would make no changes to Part 15 emission limits for unintentional radiators, however. ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, says that while Part 15's current limits on unintentional radiators on HF may be appropriate for short-duration, narrowband emissions, they are inappropriate for the sort of long-duration, broadband emissions BPL would employ. He compared short-duration, narrowband emissions at the Part 15 radiated emission limit to a helicopter flying overhead.

"The noise is deafening, but is tolerable because it doesn't happen very often nor last very long," he observed. "To a radio user, having BPL in the neighborhood would be like having the helicopter hovering constantly overhead." ARRL Lab Manager Ed Hare, W1RFI, offered an example that most hams can relate to. "The limit for an unintentional emitter on HF is 30 uV/m at 30 meters from the source," he said. "If you take a dipole cut for 3.5 MHz and put it in a 30 uV/m field, you'll have a noise reading of S9 plus 16 dB at your transceiver." Access BPL, a form of carrier current or power line carrier (PLC) communication, would apply RF in the HF to low-VHF range to existing low and medium-voltage exterior power lines to distribute Internet and broadband services. It was the aspect of feeding RF signals into outdoor power lines that initially raised Amateur Radio concerns regarding potential interference. Such carrier current or PLC systems are subject to the FCC's Part 15 rules governing unlicensed devices.

In its proposal, the FCC took a broader view of interference issues. "There is significant disagreement among the commenting parties regarding the interference potential of Access BPL," the NPRM declares. "Amateur op-

CONTINUED BPL PAGE 7

erators and amateur organizations in general are opposed to Access BPL and advocate emission limits that are lower than the existing Part 15 limits."

In a statement attached to the NPRM, however, FCC Chairman Michael Powell expressed confidence that the new requirements it spells out balance BPL's potential benefits with concerns of potential interference "by establishing new requirements that will help minimize harmful interference that may occur and guidelines for measurement of radio frequency emissions from carrier current systems." Still, the NPRM concedes, Amateur Radio operations "are likely to present a difficult challenge in the deployment of Access BPL in cases where amateurs use high-gain outdoor antennas that are located near power lines." Noting that power line noise already presents a significant problem for hams, the FCC said, "we therefore would expect that, in practice, many amateurs already orient their antennas to minimize the reception of emissions from nearby electric power lines."

The NPRM goes on to point out that because BPL has the capability to stay clear of specific frequencies, BPL providers can simply "avoid the use of amateur frequencies when in close proximity to amateur outdoor antennas." The NPRM also briefly mentions the possibility of interference to BPL systems from Amateur Radio, an issue ARRL and others raised in their comments on last April's Notice of Inquiry on BPL.

The NPRM emphasizes that under the proposed rules, operators of Access BPL systems would be responsible for eliminating any harmful interference that may occur. "Furthermore, we believe that the current Part 15 emission limits for carrier current systems in conjunction with certain additional requirements specific to Access BPL operations will be adequate to ensure that existing radio operations are protected against harmful interference from such operations," the FCC said.

The NPRM proposes changes to Part 15 that would "facilitate the deployment of Access BPL technology while protecting licensed users of the spectrum." If ultimately adopted as proposed, the NPRM would: define Access BPL for the purposes of its rules maintain the existing Part 15 emission limits for BPL require that Access BPL devices employ

"adaptive interference-mitigation techniques" require that Access BPL providers maintain a database of installation locations and technical information adopt specific measurement guidelines for both Access BPL and other carrier current systems to ensure that measurements are made in a consistent manner and provide for repeatable results in determining compliance with its rules.

Sumner suggested that, with licensed services and government users taking up large portions of the HF spectrum, protecting all licensed HF users could prove to be a nightmare for BPL providers. He noted, too, that while the FCC maintains that licensed services must be protected, the proposed rules place the burden of initiating corrective action on the shoulders of the licensed services. "And as a practical matter, the FCC's proposed rules offer no protection at all to mobile and portable stations," he added.

Sumner further stated that ARRL would continue to combat the "misconception" that BPL systems are viable as a "last mile" broadband technology for rural dwellers. "In low-density areas, the economics just don't work," he said. "A potential investor who understands the constraints under which BPL must operate won't touch such an investment."

While conceding "significant concerns" from HF users--including the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, which regulates federal government radio use--and the Federal Emergency Management Administration, the Commission said it believes the NPRM adequately addresses interference concerns.

The FCC was unanimous in its approval of the BPL proposal. Commissioner Michael Copps offered a partial dissent that had more to do with competition protections and the potential for cross-subsidization between regulated power companies and unregulated communications businesses, not with interference issues.

The NPRM can be viewed on the [FCC Web site](#) and is available in [Microsoft Word format](#), or as an [Adobe PDF file](#).

RaRa HOTLINE
(585) 442-0587 24X7

SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE IS APRIL 15, 2004

Dick Goslee KG2I

Time is running out for submitting applications for the Memorial Scholarship. The "Rochester Amateur Radio Association Memorial Scholarship" was established with generous donations made in memory of A. Leland Zwack, W2WPF, William Buchan, W2OMV and William Resch, K4VOS. The scholarship is available to any licensed Amateur Radio operator who is or will be pursuing any degree of Associate level or higher in any accredited school beyond high school. The individual must be a member of RaRa and a resident of New York State. The scholarship is for one individual for one year, but the recipient may reapply for subsequent years.

Applications are due no later than April 15th. The RaRa Board of Directors and Scholarship Committee will make a final decision by May 15th of each year. The actual award will be presented at the annual RaRa Hamfest Banquet held shortly thereafter.

Applications for the scholarship may be obtained at RaRa general meetings, by mail at P.O. Box 93333, Rochester, NY 14692-8333 or by calling the RaRa phone at 442-0587. Additional information and a copy of the application are available on the Rochester Amateur Radio Association web site at www.rochesterham.org, or from one of the officers.

Additional "tax exempt donations" in memory W2WPF, W2OMV, K4VOS or any other silent key may be sent to: Rochester Amateur Radio Association, Inc., Memorial Scholarship, P.O. Box 93333, Rochester, NY 14692-8333.

ARRL MEMBERSHIPS AT REDUCED COST

Dick Goslee KG2I

ARRL membership is available to you at a greatly reduced cost for the first year. If you have never been a member of the ARRL or your membership has lapsed for at least 2 years you are eligible for the reduced cost membership when you apply through RaRa. You will receive a \$15.00 reduction in the first year's

dues. Just make your check (regular cost less \$15.00) payable to RaRa and send it to P.O. Box 93333, Rochester, NY 14692-8333. The treasurer will complete an application for you and will forward it to the League along with a RaRa check payable to the ARRL. The League will send your new membership and subscription to QST directly to your home.

Directory Binders

Dick Goslee KG2I

Some of you have asked about getting new/replacement binders for the Directory. Unfortunately there are no more of the old binders available. We have investigated the possibility of getting a new batch of binders. However the cost of new binders and the minimum order quantities make this impossible.

There are a couple of alternatives available to you. Any of the paper stores like Staples or Office Max sell packages of brass split pins for binding papers together. You just insert the split pin through the directory and bend the two sides over on the backside. This works well and is inexpensive. Another alternative is to use a couple of small cable ties. Most of you have some of these available in your toolbox. If you leave them a little loose they will work just fine and the cost is almost nothing. If you don't have any of those just see the editor at the next meeting and I will be happy to give you a couple.

KODAK A.R.C VE TESTING (W5YI VEC)

Ray Pickens WA2MYG (Contact Person)

As of this writing the Kodak VE testing team will be operating on a new schedule every 4 months, the next session will be on April 1, 2004 17:30 Building 28 (Theater on the Ridge) at Kodak Park. This decision was arrived at due to very poor showing of Applicants in recent months. If there is a need for a group of Applicants such as a class or club to have a special VE session Please notify me wa2myg@arrl.net or by phone (585)334-8724 And I will make every effort to arrange it.

**SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL
REPEATERS**

Coming Up Fast May 1, 2004

Keith Freeberg N2BEL

The Ontario Shore Marathon, a function of the Arthritis Foundation of Rochester, is coming up May 1, 2004 and we still need several key communications positions filled. This event will start and finish at Hamlin Beach State Park with nearly 900 runners from our community taking part.

We have nearly 15 runner safety waypoint communications posts and three shuttle bus communications positions to fill. Even though we are expecting cool lake breezes it is easy for a runner to succumb to dehydration or heat exhaustion. Your communications skills in helping us get EMTs and ambulances on site, if needed, is essential.

Yes, this is one of those events you may be able to work from the comfort of the seat of your vehicle, in many cases, while relaxing with a beverage. And, the time commitment is only about half a day.

If you have never worked a Public Service event before this is a great one to learn on. The event is well organized and the runner's path is well marked. Most of all, it is a fun event with a belief that volunteers are important and the Arthritis Foundation of Rochester does take great pains to show it's appreciation.

If you would like to know more, or just have questions, please call me at 254-0722 or email n2bel@frontiernet.net. We need your help, without you there will not opportunities to show our community the year around value and talent of our Rochester Area amateur radio community.

THINK HAM RADIO

**AWA Spring Meet, Flea
Market, Auction, more...
May 1st, 2004 Bloomfield
Elementary School**

Ed Gable K2MP/W2AN

After twenty years of high risk to bad WX, the Antique Wireless Association is moving their annual Spring Meet indoors and expanding the program. The decision has been made

to move the AWA Spring meet just around the corner from the Annex to the Bloomfield Elementary School on Route 444. All events will be indoors. This will include the flea market folks, the museum excess inventory sale and auction, a member's auction and commercial vendors. You will also want to attend the new and expanded programs and demonstrations. Scheduled programs include one on the Care and Repair of Wood cabinets by Andy Wegman; another will be a show and tell by Ron Frisbie on his personal radio museum, and finally a wonderful demonstration of BIG tesla coils by Ed Wingate. All morning there will be a special demonstration of Military RTTY equipment by museum staffers Roy Wildermuth, W3RLW, and Duncan Brown, K2OEQ. There will, of course, be the usual Annex and Museum tours scheduled in the afternoon as well. The Meet is open to the public. You do not have to be an AWA member to attend. Admission is a mere three dollars and if you want to sell items an inside flea market table is an additional three dollars. Doors open at 7:00 a.m. for sellers to set up and the event starts at 8:00 a.m. There is plenty of room for smaller meetings if groups, such as the AM'ers, want to get together. The date again is May 1st. Spread the word about this new, exciting and expanded AWA Spring Meet format. Questions to edgable@awamuseum.com

Tower and Antenna available

I have a 3 section 30ft. steel tower on hinged ground foundation base. HD-73-1 Rotator a couple of years old and a Finco 10 element 2M beam. The tower is free to anyone who will take it down and the Rotator and Beam are negotiable. Contact: Dick Fish, W2OWF, 585-247-4031.

WANTED:

Volunteers to help man the Hamfest Talk-in Station June 4-6 2004. Any and all the time You can spare, please contact KB2CHY Brad Allen ballen@frontiernet.net, On 146.28/88, or call 585-247-0251

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RARA RAG 9

Confessions of a Newbie:Part2

A Road Weary Ham Larry Wallnau, W2ZEY

Authors note: Most repeater identifications and ham calls are intentionally omitted to protect the innocent (and avoid accusations of libel from the not-so-innocent).

I was thrilled by the thought of driving to the Boston area to visit my infant granddaughter for Christmas. But I had more on my agenda then to see precious Lily. I figured it would be a great opportunity to put the FT2600M in the minivan and work mobile across New York and Massachusetts. After getting some advice from the Honda service technicians and from fellow hams, I worked all day in a cold garage to complete the installation.

I studied the route on a map with the ARRL Repeater Directory open. I listed all the repeaters along the route, and entered them into a text file. Then I pasted the file into Palm Desktop, and downloaded it to the Flash Card on my PDA. Prepared, organized. I was champing at the bit to hit the highways.

JoAnn, my XYL, was a good sport because she did without the music in the CD player as I indulged in my new hobby. As we drove east on I-490 and then I-90, I worked the 146.79 repeater until out of range. In return for her patience with radio chatter, and foregoing the songs of Natalie Merchant, we stopped at the Outlet Mall for a couple of hours.

Past Syracuse, the repeaters in the Utica/Rome area threw a strong signal to the thruway and I was able to get information on road conditions further east. Ten watts was sufficient to hit the repeater. The hams there were gracious and I felt "at home" as I do on the repeaters with my friends in Rochester. Like us, they are accustomed to giving travel advisories to the road weary. However the situation changed at the next large metropolitan area.

Sadly, I overheard the most egregious on-air behavior in Schenectady. Two hams were engaged in a heated exchange about repeater management. Tempers rose. The exchange catapulted beyond reason. One ham insisted the other was a bigot for reasons X-Ray, Yankee, and Zulu. The second ham, for his part, resorted to choice epithets wholly unsuited for our operating standards. The first fellow drifted back to his issues with repeater management. The second then keyed his mic re-

peatedly for 20 seconds. I did not dare contact this repeater for road conditions. My call sign might be associated with the fray. JoAnn looked at me quizzically. "No," I said, "This is not what it [amateur radio] is about." So I shut off the Yaesu at Albany and we listened to Natalie Merchant until we got to Western Massachusetts.

I could not raise any repeaters in the Lenox/Lee area, nor in Springfield. However, I did listen to the W1AW repeater (145.45) in nearby Connecticut. Mic-shyness had overcome me as I listened to the OTs chew the rag. I was still shell-shocked from the experience in Schenectady.

After I returned to Rochester, I discussed the fracas with folks on the 146.79 repeater. Brad, W1YX, overheard me and joined the discussion. It was my first QSO with him. I had just joined RaRa and we had yet to meet. Brad asked many questions, then became an impromptu and much needed Elmer. He put the experience in perspective for me. Yes, it was poor on-air conduct. Yes, these fellows should have discussed (or argued) their grievances in another venue (email, telephone, repeater trustee meeting, and so on). Yes, it was a good idea for me to keep the mic in its holder. And finally, yes, this is highly unusual behavior in the amateur radio service. It was great to be back with friends on the Rochester repeaters.

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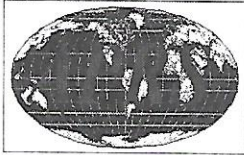
David E. Vogt ex-WB2BGJ Feb. 23, 2004

CONTINUED FROM APRS PAGE 1

weather video clips as part of her informative presentation. If you get the chance to get out to one of the other training sessions scheduled for this Spring, I'd advise you not to miss it! Find an updated list of future sessions at <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/buf/skywarnt.htm>

The presentation for our upcoming April general membership meeting will be by Jim DeTucci, N2IXD. He will be giving an updated presentation and live demonstration of the Automatic Position Reporting System, commonly referred to by the acronym APRS.

APRS is a real-time tactical digital communications protocol for exchanging information between large numbers



of stations covering a large (local) area. As a multi-user data network, it is quite different from conventional packet radio. Jim will discuss how APRS is currently being applied to public service and emergency communications applications as well as everyday casual use. He will provide an overview of the equipment and software required to get started in this rapidly growing digital radio phenomenon and how you can easily get your own APRS station on the air. He will display and demonstrate mobile "APRS Trackers" he has built, including one little gem that I keep telling him is worth a write-up for QST. I'll bet that you walk away from this meeting with an idea of how you can use APRS to add new spark to amateur radio for you and your buddies!

Jim received his first ticket in 1988 and upgraded to Amateur Extra in 1991. He is an Vice President of the Rochester Radio Repeater Association and an Assistant Emergency Coordinator for Monroe County ARES. His interest in APRS goes back to his first HF APRS station in 1994. He now operates an HF-to-VHF APRS gateway and actively works both amateur satellites and the International Space Station via APRS. Those of you already active in the local APRS community frequently watch Jim buzz around town in his Ford Explorer identified as N2IXD-7 on the APRS maps. You can even get his latest reported position right now on the Internet, by going to <http://www.findu.com/cgi-bin/find.cgi?call=N2IXD-7>

We will also have a bonus short presentation by Jon Dickason, N2JAC. He will inform

us about how we radio amateurs contribute to and can serve communications needs at the Susquehannock Trail Pro Rally this June. This



driving competition, sponsored by the Finger Lakes Region of the Sports Car Club of America, takes place in the Wellsboro area of Northern Pennsylvania on some of the most challenging roads anywhere. Jon characterizes STPR as "the most exciting public service event I've ever worked, and the most popular motorsport in the world." He'll be bringing the video footage to prove it!

My hope for this year is to find as many ways for folks to get involved in local amateur activities as I can and learn a little along the way. Slots for the rest of the season are filled at this time; however if you have a program idea, please contact me regarding it anyway. I am keeping a list of ideas to help our next VP. I also know that Ed Gable is looking for photos and other historical material regarding the Club for Old Timer's Night in May. Please take a minute to see what you might have to contribute, as I have every reason to believe it will be well cared for and put to good use! Lastly, don't forget to set aside Saturday, June 19th to attend the annual RaRa picnic in Ellison Park.

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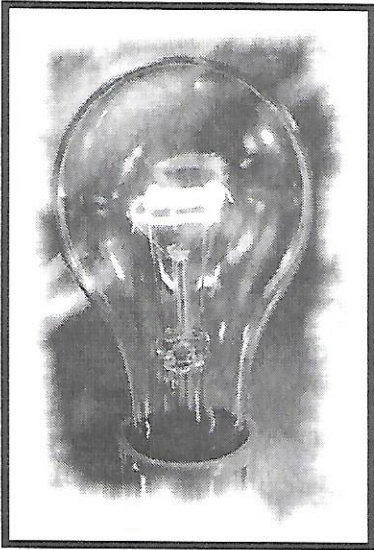
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